



On-Demand Writing

Sample Released Writing Prompts with Annotated
Student Responses and Multiple-Choice Items
Spring 2008



Grade 8





Sample Released Writing Prompts with Annotated Student Responses and Multiple-Choice Items Spring 2008

This document contains released writing tasks and multiple-choice items from the Spring 2008 Kentucky Core Content Test.

Table of Contents

Kentucky Writing Scoring Rubric	3
Writing Task Directions	4
Writer's Reference Sheet.....	5
Grade 8 On-Demand and Multiple-Choice Overview	6
Grade 8 Prompt with Student Responses.....	8
Grade 8 Multiple Choice.....	40

Kentucky Writing Scoring Rubric

0	1	2	3	4
CONTENT				
Purpose and Audience; Idea Development and Support				
<p>The writing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Lacks purpose <input type="checkbox"/> Lacks awareness of audience <input type="checkbox"/> Lacks idea development; may provide random details 	<p>The writing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Attempts to establish a general purpose; lacks focus <input type="checkbox"/> Indicates limited awareness of audience's needs <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates limited idea development with few details and/or weak support; may attempt to apply some characteristics of the genre 	<p>The writing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Attempts to establish and maintain a narrowed purpose; some lapses in focus <input type="checkbox"/> Indicates some awareness of audience's needs; makes some attempt to communicate with an audience; may demonstrate some voice and/or tone <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates some idea development with details/support; support may be unelaborated, irrelevant and/or repetitious; may apply some characteristics of the genre 	<p>The writing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Establishes and maintains an authentic focused purpose throughout <input type="checkbox"/> Indicates an awareness of audience's needs; communicates adequately with audience; conveys voice and/or appropriate tone <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates depth of idea development with specific, sufficient details/support; applies characteristics of the genre 	<p>The writing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Establishes and maintains an authentic and insightful focused purpose throughout <input type="checkbox"/> Indicates a strong awareness of audience's needs; communicates effectively with audience; sustains distinctive voice and/or appropriate tone <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates reflective, analytical and/or insightful idea development; provides specific, thorough support; skillfully applies characteristics of the genre
0	1	2	3	4
STRUCTURE				
Organization: unity and coherence; Sentences: structure and length				
<p>The writing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates random organization <input type="checkbox"/> Lacks transitional elements <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates incorrect sentence structure throughout 	<p>The writing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates ineffective or weak organization <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates limited and/or ineffective transitional elements <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates some ineffective or incorrect sentence structure 	<p>The writing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates logical organization with lapses in coherence <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates some effective transitional elements <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates simple sentences; may attempt more complex sentences but lacks control of sentence structure 	<p>The writing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates logical, coherent organization <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates logical, effective transitional elements throughout <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates control and variety in sentence structure 	<p>The writing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates careful and/or subtle organization that enhances the purpose <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates varied and subtle transitional elements throughout <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates control, variety and complexity in sentence structure to enhance meaning
0	1	2	3	4
CONVENTIONS				
Language: grammar and usage, word choice; Correctness: spelling, punctuation, capitalization, abbreviation and documentation				
<p>The writing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates lack of control in grammar and usage <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates incorrect or ineffective word choice <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates lack of control in correctness 	<p>The writing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates some control of grammar and usage with some errors that do not interfere with communication <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates simplistic and/or imprecise word choice <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates some control of correctness with some errors that do not interfere with communication 	<p>The writing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates some control of grammar and usage with some errors that do not interfere with communication <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates acceptable word choice appropriate for audience and purpose <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates control of correctness relative to length and complexity 	<p>The writing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates control of grammar and usage to enhance meaning <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates accurate, rich and/or precise word choice appropriate for audience and purpose <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates control of correctness to enhance communication 	

Writing Task Directions

This part of the test contains two writing tasks. Read the two writing tasks carefully. Choose ONE of the writing tasks to complete. You will have 60 minutes to complete this task. You may not work or conference with anyone.

- Think about what you want to write.
- Use your Writer's Reference Sheet to guide you in planning, revising, and editing your response.
- Use a prewriting/planning activity such as making notes, outlining, webbing, mapping, clustering, or brainstorming on paper provided by your teacher.
- Review the scoring criteria on the following page. These criteria will be used to score your work.
- Write a draft on paper provided by your teacher.
- Revise and edit your draft. You may use a dictionary and/or thesaurus.
- Write the FINAL copy in the space provided in your Student Response Booklet (Writing – Part B).

REMEMBER: The prewriting/planning activities will NOT be scored. Only your final copy in your Student Response Booklet will be scored. DO NOT WRITE ANY ANSWERS IN THIS TEST BOOKLET. WHEN YOU FINISH, DO NOT WORK ON ANY OTHER PART OF THE TEST.

Writer's Reference Sheet

Follow the steps below to help you successfully write your response.

Focusing

- ✓ Read the task to identify your purpose and audience and the form of writing you should use.
- ✓ Think about information you may have (personal experiences, current issues, and your knowledge about this topic) that will help you fulfill the purpose in your response to the task and meet the needs of the audience.

Prewriting

- ✓ After reading the task and focusing your thinking, begin to plan what you will write.
 - Select and narrow your topic.
 - Focus on your purpose by identifying a central/controlling idea.
 - Identify your audience's needs.
 - Generate and organize your ideas and support. (You may use graphic organizers.)

Drafting

- ✓ Write a first draft of your response to the task on paper provided by your teacher.

Revising

- ✓ Be sure to review your writing for the following:
 - Focus and attention to purpose and audience
 - Development of ideas, details, and support
 - Clear organization, with transitions as necessary
 - Variety of sentence structures

Editing

- ✓ Review your writing and correct any errors in sentence structure, word choice, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling.

Publishing

- ✓ The final draft of your response must be written in your Student Response Booklet.

As you revise, ask yourself these important questions.

When I organized my writing, did I

- include an attention-getting lead (such as a quote, a question, or a statement)?
- develop the body (with supporting details, transitions, and paragraphs)?
- conclude effectively (by referring back to the lead, asking the audience to take action, leaving the audience something to think about, etc.)?

If it is a letter, have I

- used the correct letter form (business or friendly)?
- supported my purpose with details?
- answered my audience's anticipated questions?

If it is an editorial, have I

- given my opinion?
- supported my opinion with reasons?
- given examples, statistics, stories, etc., to support each reason?

If it is an article, have I

- focused on an interesting angle of the topic?
- supported my purpose with relevant idea development?
- used text features effectively (sections with headings, bulleted lists, etc.)?

If it is a speech, have I

- met the needs of my audience?
- supported my purpose with details that will engage the audience?

Remember to print or write neatly.

Grade 8 On-Demand and Multiple-Choice Overview

Grade 8 On-Demand Writing Information

The on-demand writing tasks are designed to assess students' abilities to use appropriate forms, conventions, and styles to communicate ideas and information given a specific audience, purpose, and form for the piece of writing. Common purposes include persuading, narrating an event for a transactive purpose, and informing. Small amounts of text, graphics, and charts may be incorporated into the prompt. Common forms of written responses at grade 8 include letters, articles, editorials, and speeches.

Narrate an Event for a Transactive Purpose

Students will use narration (a story or an account) in order to support an idea, opinion, conclusion, interpretation, request, etc. The storyline, which could be based on the student's experience, **is a way of developing the writing in order to accomplish a realistic, transactive purpose.**

All writing for the on-demand writing test is transactive in nature, so when students develop their writing by using narration, their purpose is **not** to complete, for example, a personal narrative. The story is a **means of helping students inform/persuade readers to accept their ideas, opinions, conclusions, etc.** The story is **one form of support and idea development** available to the writer in accomplishing his or her purpose.

Some ways to indicate this purpose:

- "Tell about a time . . ."
- "Refer to your own experience and . . ."
- "From your own experience, relate an incident that . . ."

Persuade

Students will write in order **to convince the reader to take some action or to accept the writer's idea, request, opinion, conclusion, interpretation, plan, recommendation, etc.** Providing readers with appropriate information may well be a part of the persuasive writing, but student writers also should remember that their purpose is **to convince the reader to agree with the writer's ideas or to take the action the writer advocates.**

Students should show awareness of their audience in developing the persuasive writing. They should develop the writing in ways to convince the reader. Some ways to indicate this purpose:

- "Convince readers to . . ."
- "Write to help others accept your opinion about . . ."
- "Urge readers to . . ."

Inform

Students will write in order **to present information and provide explanation that can help readers understand something relevant to students’ lives and experiences (e.g., issue, problem, need, event) or to accomplish a task/procedure, achieve a goal, solve a problem, etc.**

Students should be reminded that merely providing information is not enough for writing such as that called for in the on-demand writing test. Explanation (idea development) is needed. In writing to inform, students should reveal their thinking and their ability to communicate effectively with readers. Writing to inform, then, will provide explanation, information, and other support to accomplish a realistic purpose. In developing the writing, students should show their ability to communicate effectively with readers, not merely repeat information they have learned, as in writing to demonstrate learning to the teacher.

Some ways to indicate this purpose:

- “Help readers understand that . . . ”
- “Share your knowledge . . . ”
- “Provide information that will . . . ”

Multiple-Choice Writing Assessment

The multiple-choice assessment is comprised of 12 items that address the Revising and Editing components of the Writing Process subdomain of the Writing Core Content for Assessment 4.1.

Grade 8 Prompt with Student Responses

Narrate an Event for a Transactive Purpose: Editorial

Sample Writing Task

Situation:

In an effort to promote better relationships in the community, an entire issue of your local newspaper will be devoted to acts of kindness. These acts could include a student standing up for another student, someone helping his or her neighbor during a difficult time, or an individual volunteering to make someone's life easier.

Writing Task:

Write an editorial for the local newspaper about the importance of being kind to others. Tell about a time when you observed or participated in an act of kindness. Support your response with details or examples.

Academic Expectations: 1.11 Students write using appropriate forms, conventions, and styles to communicate ideas and information to different audiences for different purposes.

Core Content Code:**WR-M-1.1.0**

Purpose/Audience: Students will establish and maintain a focused purpose to communicate with an authentic audience by

- Narrowing the topic to create a specific purpose for writing
- Establishing a controlling idea, theme, or conclusion about the topic
- Choosing a perspective authentic to the writer
- Analyzing and addressing the needs of the intended audience
- Adhering to the characteristics of the form
- Applying a suitable tone
- Allowing voice to emerge when appropriate

See Core Content Code 08-1.1.3 for specific indicators dealing with transactive writing.

WR-M-1.2.0

Idea Development/Support: Students will support main ideas and deepen the audience's understanding of purpose by

- Developing logical, justified, and suitable explanations
- Providing relevant elaboration
- Explaining related connections or reflections
- Applying idea development strategies appropriate to the form

See Core Content Code 08-1.2.3 for specific indicators dealing with transactive writing.

WR-M-2.3.0

Organization: Students will create unity and coherence to accomplish the focused purpose by

- Engaging the audience
- Establishing a context for reading when appropriate

- Communicating ideas and support in a meaningful order
- Applying transitions and transitional elements to guide the reader through the piece
- Developing effective closure

See Core Content Code 08-2.3.3 for specific indicators dealing with transactive writing.

WR-M-2.4.0

Sentence Structure: Students will create effective sentences by

- Applying a variety of structures and lengths
- Developing complete and correct sentences unless using unconventional structures for an intentional effect when appropriate

See Core Content Code 08-2.4.3 for specific indicators dealing with transactive writing.

WR-M-3.5.0

Language: Students will exemplify effective language choices by

- Applying correct grammar and usage
- Applying concise use of language
- Incorporating strong verbs, precise nouns, concrete details, and sensory details
- Applying language appropriate to the content, purpose, and audience

See Core Content Code 08-3.5.3 for specific indicators dealing with transactive writing.

WR-M-3.6.0

Correctness: Students will communicate clearly by

- Applying correct spelling
- Applying correct punctuation
- Applying correct capitalization
- Incorporating acceptable departure from standard correctness to enhance meaning when appropriate
- Incorporating appropriate documentation of ideas and information from outside sources (e.g., citing authors or titles within the text, listing sources)

Student Response

Score: 4-4-4

The word "kind" is defined as a sympathetic, forbearing (meaning patient) or pleasant nature. I assume, then, that to be kind or do acts of kindness, you must have those qualities. How many people in our town and everywhere else do you see that are sympathetic, patient and generally pleasant? I can answer that one: not many. Also, even though this sounds like a psychiatrist, how does it make you feel when someone is unkind to you? If you answered, "Oh it makes me feel wonderful!" you need a reality check. In this issue of the paper we've been talking about acts of kindness, but do we really know how important kindness is? It's essential to the well-being of our town and the world.

For example, in the fifth grade I had a friend whom I'll call John. John had a very rough and stressful home life and was picked upon a lot at school. People were unkind to him and everyday it grew worse. Finally, towards the end of the year, he told me darkly on the bus ride home, "I think I'll kill myself tonight." When asked why he would do such a thing, he said that no one cared about him. I assured him that I did and reminded him of all the times I had been his friend. He didn't kill himself.

Student Response

Score: 4-4-4

Later, in fact, he thanked me for being so kind to him. If I hadn't been, I would've had tragedy on my hands. That's why kindness to others is so important! People feel better about themselves and have a reason to live! It goes back to the saying, "To the world you may only be one person, but to one person you may be the world."

Now, let's not forget the reality of our world. There's benefits in everything you do. If you're kind to someone, not only would you feel better about yourself, but there could be a cash value in it for you. Just think, you see someone drop their wallet. Doing the kind thing, you give it back to their owner. Ah, what's this? The owner hands you a crisp twenty for being so kind. Cha-Ching! Not only do you have a satisfied feeling, but twenty dollars too!

Be kind, it's important to us all. It keeps us living, giving us a will to live. If that doesn't motivate you, the possibility of cash benefits might!

4 Content

The writer establishes and maintains an authentic and insightful focused purpose—to raise the audience’s awareness about kindness and to encourage the audience to perform acts of kindness toward others. The writer demonstrates a strong awareness of the nature of kindness and its importance to individuals and society. This characteristic contributes to the insightful focused purpose of the editorial. The writer seems to understand that true acts of kindness are very rare (“How many people in our town and everywhere else do you see that are sympathetic, patient, and generally pleasant? I can answer that one: not many”) and that both kindness and lack of kindness can have profound and far-reaching consequences (“It’s [kindness] essential to the well-being of our town and the world”). The writer also understands that many people do not realize the extreme importance of being kind to others (“In this issue of the paper we’ve been talking about acts of kindness, but do we really know how important kindness is?”).

The writing indicates a strong awareness of the audience’s needs. The writer provides a definition of the word “kind” at the beginning of the response. The definition informs the audience about the content of the editorial and piques their interest in reading further. The rhetorical questions in the first paragraph provide food for thought pertaining to the importance of kindness. The writer asks a rhetorical question and then answers it (e.g., “In this issue of the paper we’ve been talking about acts of kindness, but do we really know how important kindness is? It’s essential to the well-being of our town and the world”). The writer then goes on to show that kindness is essential by telling the story about his/her friend “John.” This technique allows the writer to raise key points. The technique also helps to move the discussion forward in a seamless manner. An audience would appreciate the momentum and clarity that exists in the writing as a result of this technique.

The writer effectively communicates with the audience by asking and answering rhetorical questions. The writer uses this technique to raise and discuss key points. The writer is able to effectively communicate with the audience by sustaining a distinctive voice throughout the editorial. Both of these characteristics help the writer to succeed at narrating for a transactive purpose, because they enhance the emotional power of the editorial. The strong and distinctive voice helps the audience to accept the writer’s opinions and ideas as righteous truths. The theme and message in the editorial are powerful and persuasive as a result of the eloquent and emotionally charged language that enhances the writer’s voice (e.g., “Finally, towards the end of the year, he told me darkly on the bus ride home, ‘I think I’ll kill myself tonight,’” “I assured him that I did [care about him] and reminded him of all the times I had been his friend. He didn’t kill himself”).

The writer demonstrates reflective and insightful idea development throughout the response. The story about John acts as specific and thorough support for the main idea (e.g., “John had a very rough and stressful home life and was picked upon a lot at school. People were unkind to him and everyday it grew worse. Finally, towards the end of the year, he told me darkly on the bus ride home, ‘I think I’ll kill myself tonight.’”). The writer also makes the point that you never know

Annotation

when you might receive a monetary reward for performing an act of kindness. This argument is a little far-fetched and deviates somewhat from the idea of acts of kindness as purely altruistic gestures; however, the writer develops and supports this point quite well (e.g., “If you’re kind to someone, not only would you feel better about yourself, but there could be a cash value in it for you,” “Doing the kind thing, you give it [wallet] back to their owner,” “The owner hands you a crisp twenty for being so kind”).

The writer skillfully applies a characteristic of the editorial genre by clearly stating his/her opinions and supporting them with specific details (e.g., “It’s [kindness] essential to the well-being of our town and the world,” “When asked why he [John] would do such a thing [kill himself], he said that no one cared about him. I assured him that I did and reminded him of all the times I had been his friend. He didn’t kill himself”). The writer skillfully applies a characteristic of the editorial genre through language that is conversational and addresses the audience (e.g., “Now, let’s not forget the reality of our world,” “Be kind, it’s important to us all. It keeps us living, giving us a will to live. If that doesn’t motivate you, the possibility of cash benefits might!”).

4 Structure

The writing demonstrates careful and subtle organization. The writer enhances the purpose of the editorial by providing a clear beginning, middle, and ending. The organization in the response provides natural and logical progression. Each paragraph is focused around a specific idea. The last sentence of the first paragraph provides a fluid transition into the story of a specific act of kindness in the second paragraph (“It’s essential to the well-being of our town and the world,” “For example, in the fifth grade I had a friend whom I’ll call John. John had a very rough and stressful home life”). In the last paragraph, the writer summarizes the central ideas of the response. Reiterating the central ideas brings the purpose of the editorial into clear focus once again. The last paragraph provides a concise and effective conclusion (“Be kind, it’s important to us all. It keeps us living, giving us a will to live. If that doesn’t motivate you, the possibility of cash benefits might!”).

The writer demonstrates varied and subtle transitional elements that connect ideas and enhance the fluidity of the writing throughout the response. The transitional elements include words (e.g., “Also,” “For example,” “Finally”) and phrases and sentences (“I assume, then, that to be kind or do acts of kindness, you must have those qualities. How many people in our town and everywhere else do you see that are sympathetic, patient, and generally pleasant?” “Later, in fact, he thanked me for being so kind to him,” “There’s benefits in everything you do. If you’re kind to someone, not only would you feel better about yourself, but there could be a cash value in it for you”).

Annotation

The writer demonstrates variety and complexity in sentence structure. The writer skillfully blends complex and simple sentences to enhance the meaning, rhythm, and rhetorical effect of the writing. A passage near the end of the response contains some good examples of the writer's effective use of simple and complex sentences. ("Now, let's not forget the reality of our world. There's benefits in everything you do. If you're kind to someone, not only would you feel better about yourself, but there could be a cash value in it for you").

4 Conventions

The writer demonstrates control of grammar and usage to enhance meaning at a level of skill that is quite sophisticated for an eighth-grade student. The writer sets off an adverbial ("then") with commas, a grammatically correct action that helps to emphasize the statement by creating a pause ("I assume, then, that to be kind or do acts of kindness, you must have those qualities"). There are many examples where the power of the writing is enhanced by the writer's creative use of rhetorical grammar (e.g., "Finally, towards the end of the year, he told me darkly on the bus ride home, 'I think I'll kill myself tonight.'"). The response contains a couple of minor mistakes in grammar, including a subject-verb agreement error ("There's benefits in everything you do") and an incorrect pronoun, "that" rather than "who" ("How many people in our town and everywhere else do you see that are sympathetic, patient, and generally pleasant?").

The writer demonstrates accurate and rich word choice that is appropriate for the audience and purpose. The writer uses formal and informal phrases and words for dramatic effect (e.g., "How many people in our town and everywhere else do you see that are sympathetic, patient, and generally pleasant? I can answer that one: not many," "essential," "darkly," "crisp," and "Cha-Ching!").

The writer demonstrates control of correctness to enhance communication. The transactive purpose is enhanced by the writer's skillful use of punctuation, specifically, the colon and exclamation mark (e.g., "I can answer that one: not many," "Not only do you have a satisfied feeling, but twenty dollars too!"). The writer capitalizes words accurately. There is one spelling error, "benifits" rather than "benefits."

Reach Out!

Have you ever been going through a tough time when you could have really used a friend? Maybe you are right now. No matter who you are or where you live, I know you've come across someone in need. It could be that they are going through tough financial times, family disputes, or are just having a bad day. As a community, it is our responsibility to reach out to those who are truly hurting. Kindness is very important. Showing kindness to people can completely change their day or sometimes even their lives.

I'm sure you don't know every single person in your entire community. By showing kindness, you open the door to meeting new people and making new friends. Let's say you've just received the news that new neighbors are moving in down the road. That's a great opportunity! Not only is this a chance to meet new people but it's also a chance to welcome them with love and kindness. I'm sure they'll be pleased to know that you care enough to introduce yourself.

Kindness can do almost anything. Kindness heals, mends, and builds. Our community isn't exactly as close as it could be but if we give kindness a chance anything could happen. By doing small acts of kindness our community can grow closer and

Student Response

Score: 3-4-4

stranger. Kindness is necessary to have a happy functioning community. Just the other day my Church decided to do something very kind. They heard that a family was in need of a better place to live and volunteered close to \$9,000 to buy the family a new home. Our community is growing closer every day.

As I said earlier, we all go through hard times. When you see someone experiencing difficulties, think about how you would feel. Don't be afraid to show the person you care. Show kindness and compassion. The next time you are going through a hard time you may be surprised to find that person reaching out and touching your life just because you were nice enough to help them.

After reading this I hope you have gotten the message and taken it as a wakeup call. Instead of turning away, be the one who makes a change and lends a hand. Our community could do so much if we worked together and used kindness as the glue that holds us together. So, here's my challenge to you. Do something kind everyday and see if it changes you. Show a smile, share a story, or give a hug. Show kindness and receive it. To be truly rewarded, just REACH OUT!

3 Content

The writer establishes and maintains an authentic focused purpose by citing reasons that people need to be treated with kindness (e.g., “tough financial times,” “They [the writer’s church] heard that a family was in need of a better place to live”). The writer establishes and maintains an authentic focused purpose by explaining that kindness is powerful (e.g., “Kindness can do almost anything. Kindness heals, mends, and builds,” “Our community could do so much if we worked together and used kindness as the glue that holds us together”). These characteristics give the writing an authentic focused purpose and indicate that the writer understands how important kindness is.

The writer indicates an awareness of the audience’s needs by reminding the audience about their own need for kindness (e.g., “Have you ever been going through a tough time when you could have really used a friend? Maybe you are right now”). The writer attends to the audience’s needs by reminding them that they actually know people who are in need of kindness (e.g., “No matter who you are or where you live, I know you’ve come across someone in need”). These techniques emphasize an important theme in the editorial—kindness is needed everywhere and by everyone.

The writer adequately communicates with the audience. Much of the language in the response is eloquent and emotional. This allows the writer to succeed at narrating for a transactive purpose (e.g., “Let’s say you’ve just received the news that new neighbors are moving in down the road. That’s a great opportunity! Not only is this a chance to meet new people but it’s also a chance to welcome them with love and kindness,” “Do something kind everyday and see if it changes you,” “Show kindness and receive it”). The first sentence of the editorial (“Have you ever been going through a tough time when you could have really used a friend?”) is a rhetorical question for the audience. The writer puts the issue of kindness at the forefront of the audience’s minds by appealing to their sense of empathy. The writer asks the audience to be kinder in the future in the last paragraph of the editorial (e.g., “Instead of turning away, be the one who makes a change and lends a hand,” “So, here’s my challenge to you. Do something kind everyday and see if it changes you”). The editorial ends with an imperative sentence that mimics the title, “REACH OUT!” The writing conveys an appropriate tone. The writer empathizes with the audience, as well as with people who are in need of kindness, and the tone reflects these emotions.

The writing demonstrates depth of idea development with some specific and insightful details. Insightful details and a clearly focused purpose are the key strengths of the idea development in the response. Much of the support, however, consists of hypothetical statements and personal opinion rather than concrete details (e.g., “Let’s say you’ve just received the news that new neighbors are moving in down the road. That’s a great opportunity!”). The writer talks about a specific act of kindness only briefly—the writer’s church has raised money to help a family buy a new home. The story lacks rhetorical power because it is not developed, and it would have to be developed more fully for it to be useful in narrating for a transactive purpose.

Annotation

The writer applies characteristics of the genre by providing an opinion that is intended to convey central ideas and to stress the importance of kindness in the first paragraph. The purpose of an editorial is to state an opinion and to attempt to persuade an audience to believe the opinion and to act on it. An editorial writer must attempt to do this from the onset of the writing, as the writer of this response has done. The first paragraph readies the audience to “hear” the rest of the discussion (“Showing kindness to people can completely change their day or sometimes even their lives”). The writer applies characteristics of the genre by explaining what the audience should do (e.g., “After reading this I hope you have gotten the message and taken it as a wake up call. Instead of turning away, be the one who makes a change and lends a hand”).

4 Structure

The writing demonstrates careful organization that enhances the purpose. The organization enables the writer to narrate for a transactive purpose by allowing ideas to flow from one paragraph to the next, which makes the writing more dynamic and persuasive. The writer builds momentum as the editorial progresses. The passages in the introduction and the conclusion help to solidify the editorial into a coherent and cohesive whole (e.g., “No matter who you are or where you live, I know yov’e come across someone in need,” “Instead of turning away, be the one who makes a change and lends a hand”). The last sentence of the first paragraph nicely summarizes the first paragraph and enhances the flow of ideas to the second paragraph (“Showing kindness to people can completely change their day or sometimes even their lives,” “I’m sure you don’t know every single person in your entire community,” “Let’s say yov’e just recieved the news that new neighbors are moving in down the road,” “I’m sure they’ll be pleased to know that you care enough to introduce yourself”).

The writing demonstrates subtle and varied transitional elements. The writer uses mainly phrases (e.g., “As a community,” “By showing kindness,” “As I said earlier,” “After reading this”) and sentences (e.g., “By showing kindness, you open the door to meeting new people and making new friends,” “That’s a great opportunity!”) to transition between ideas.

The writer demonstrates control, variety, and complexity in sentence structure to enhance meaning. The writer uses combinations of simple and complex sentences. This technique enhances meaning because it gives the writing rhetorical power (e.g., “Kindness can do almost anything. Kindness heals, mends, and builds,” “Our community could do so much if we worked together and used kindness as the glue that holds us together”).

4 Conventions

The writing demonstrates control of grammar and usage to enhance meaning. The writer uses rhetorical grammar with a considerable amount of skill in providing information about the need for people to be kind toward one another. The response contains vivid object nouns (e.g., “financial times,” “family disputes”), adverbials (e.g., “as the glue that holds us together”), and

Annotation

a variety of other grammatical structures that enhance meaning and communication. The word choice is accurate and appropriate for the audience and purpose (“Reach Out!” “responsibility,” “a happy functioning community,” “experiencing difficulties”). The writing demonstrates control of correctness. The writer demonstrates control of spelling by spelling complex polysyllabic words correctly (e.g., “financial,” “disputes,” “functioning”). The writer demonstrates control of punctuation by using commas to offset modifying adverbial phrases (e.g., “No matter who you are or where you live, I know yov’e come across someone in need”). The writer occasionally uses apostrophes incorrectly (“yov’e”) or omits commas (e.g., “After reading this I hope you have gotten the message,” “To be truly rewarded just REACH OUT!”).

Student Response

Score: 3-3-3

Being kind to someone else is one of the greatest things you could ever do in your life. People struggle all over our community every day with different problems and situations and they have no help with them. When you help someone with a certain job or anything, you touch the lives of so many people. What I mean is, you're not only helping the person alone, you're helping yourself. After you have helped someone you feel so good about yourself and many people are proud of you because you thought of being generous. Also, doing a good deed for somebody sets a good example for younger kids. When they see you helping someone out, they see that that is the right thing to do and they would also like to help someday. You could always encourage them to start now too.

Last year, I had the great opportunity to help out at our local Special Olympics. I have many friends that are a Special Needs child and when they saw that I was helping out with the activities, they were so proud that I was their friend. My friend, _____, is in a wheel chair and she asked me if I would push her in the wheel chair race. I told her that I would and her eyes just lit up and she was so excited! We won the race and I never felt better. It helped me understand how precious life really is and just opened my eyes up.

Student Response

Score: 3-3-3

You too, can help out someone that is times of trouble. Just being kind to someone can touch the hearts of many, but most of all, it will touch yours. Don't always think of yourself, think of someone else for a change.

3 Content

The writer establishes and maintains an authentic focused purpose throughout the response. The purpose of the editorial is to persuade people to be kind. The writer establishes and maintains the purpose by describing why kindness is important and providing information that demonstrates kindness in action. The writer discusses why kindness to others is important in the first paragraph: Helping someone makes you feel good about yourself and other people are proud of you for being kind; helping someone sets a good example for younger kids to follow. This is followed by a description of a specific act of kindness that the writer has performed (“Last year, I had the great opportunity to help out at our local Special Olympics”). The writer reiterates why kindness is important in the last paragraph (e.g., “Just being kind to someone can touch the hearts of many, but most of all, it will touch yours”).

The writer indicates an awareness of the audience’s needs. The editorial begins with a powerful statement that describes kindness in unequivocal terms (“Being kind to someone else is one of the greatest things you could ever do in your life”). The editorial contains many similar heartfelt and insightful statements that allow the writer to succeed at narrating for a transactive purpose, because the writer refers to ideas that the audience knows is true (e.g., “People struggle all over our community every day with different problems and situations and they have no help with them,” “Also, doing a good deed for somebody sets a good example for younger kids,” “Just being kind to someone can touch the hearts of many, but most of all, it will touch yours”).

The writer communicates adequately with the audience. Most central ideas and main points are adequately communicated, but meaning is unclear where the writing is vague and ambiguous (e.g., “When you help someone with a certain job or anything, you touch the lives of so many people. What I mean is, you’re not only helping the person alone, you’re helping yourself”). The writing conveys the writer’s voice. The writer’s voice is quite strong and earnest throughout the editorial and this helps the writer to communicate more effectively with the audience (e.g., “I told her that I would and her eyes just lit up and she was so excited! We won the race and I never felt better. It helped me understand how precious life really is and just opened my eyes up”).

The writer demonstrates depth of idea development with specific support. The response contains a fairly thorough discussion about why kindness is important. The writer does a good job developing the idea that people feel good about themselves when they show kindness to others. The writer supports this idea with the story about helping a friend to participate in the Special Olympics. The story helps the writer narrate for a transactive purpose because it shows that people actually do feel good about themselves when they perform acts of kindness and communicates this idea to the audience by demonstrating that it is true (e.g., “We won the race and I never felt better. It helped me understand how precious life really is and just opened my eyes up”). The writer states that being kind sets a good example for “younger kids,” but provides few details to develop and support this idea (“When they [younger kids] see you helping someone out, they see that that is the right thing to do and they would also like to help someday. You could always encourage them to start now too”). The last paragraph of the editorial is very

Annotation

brief; the writer hastily mentions central ideas (e.g., “You too, can help out someone that is times of trouble. Just being kind to someone can touch the hearts of many, but most of all, it will touch yours”). There should be details supporting the writer’s opinion at the end of the editorial (“Don’t always think of yourself, think of someone else for a change”).

The writer applies some characteristics of the genre by speaking directly to the audience (e.g., “You could always encourage them [younger kids] to start now too,” “You too, can help out someone that is times of trouble,” “Don’t always think of yourself, think of someone else for a change”). Editorial writers often direct their comments to the audience, as this writer has done. The technique helps to instill an audience with a sense of responsibility about an issue, and then the audience will hopefully be persuaded to take action on the issue.

3 Structure

The writer demonstrates logical and coherent organization that allows the reader to follow the progression of the discussion. The topic—why kindness is important—is introduced in the first paragraph (e.g., “People struggle all over our community every day with different problems and situations and they have no help with them”). In the second paragraph, the writer details and supports the opinions from the first paragraph. This organization enhances the cohesiveness of the discussion because it allows the writer to progress from the philosophical statements in the first paragraph (e.g., “After you have helped someone you feel so good about yourself and many people are proud of you”) to the description of an act of kindness in the second paragraph (e.g., “Last year, I had the great opportunity to help out at our local Special Olympics”). The organization is somewhat weakened by the abrupt ending of the editorial. The last sentence conveys an important and relevant point, but the writer seems to have added it mainly to end the editorial in a hurry (“Don’t always think of yourself, think of someone else for a change”).

The writing demonstrates logical and effective transitional elements. The writer restates ideas (“After you have helped someone”) and uses transition words and phrases (e.g., “Also,” “Last year,” “You too”). The writing demonstrates control and variety in sentence structure. The writer demonstrates the ability to apply sentence structure to enhance the rhythm and rhetorical power of some of the writing in the editorial. The writer uses different types of sentences and combinations of sentences. The technique helps the writer to convey to the audience that kindness is important (e.g., “Last year, I had the great opportunity to help out at our local Special Olympics. I have many friends that are a Special Needs child and when they saw that I was helping out with the activities, they were so proud that I was their friend”). The response contains minor errors in sentence structure, as in the previous example, although, errors rarely interfere with communication. There are some awkward and incorrect sentences (e.g., “When they see you helping someone out, they see that that is the right thing to do and they would also like to help someday”). The compound sentence that follows could be revised as a complex sentence: “People struggle all over our community every day with different problems and situations and they have no help with them.” The sentence could be revised in various ways such as, “There are people in our community who struggle every day with difficult problems and situations without help from anyone.”

3 Conventions

The writer demonstrates control of grammar and usage relative to length and complexity. The topic of the editorial—the importance of kindness—is familiar but complex, because the writer must discuss both philosophical ideas (e.g., “Being kind to someone else is one of the greatest things you could ever do in your life”) and tangible events (e.g., “My friend . . . is in a wheel chair and she asked me if I would push her in the wheel chair race”) to cover the subject matter effectively; yet, the writer demonstrates control of grammar and usage despite the complexity and length of the text. There are minor grammatical errors. Grammatical errors include unparallel structures (e.g., “they see that that is the right thing to do and they would also like to help someday”), incorrect pronouns (e.g., “that” rather than “who”), and singular and plural nouns (e.g., “child” rather than “children”): “I have many friends that are a Special Needs child.”

The writer demonstrates acceptable word choice that is appropriate for the audience and purpose. Many of the words are relevant to the topic; they enable the writer to narrate for the transactive purpose by conveying the message that kindness is important to the audience (e.g., “struggle,” “problems,” “situations,” “proud,” “good deed,” “generous,” “precious,” “touch the hearts of many”). The writer demonstrates control of correctness relative to the length and complexity of the response; the writer uses eloquent and complex language in many of the sentences to discuss a complex topic (e.g., “People struggle all over our community every day with different problems and situations and they have no help with them,” “After you have helped someone you feel so good about yourself and many people are proud of you because you thought of being generous”). There are minor errors in punctuation and capitalization. The writer omits commas between independent clauses (e.g., “you feel so good about yourself and many people are proud of you because you thought of being generous”). The writer incorrectly capitalizes “special needs” (“I have many friends that are a Special Needs child”). The writer correctly spells polysyllabic words: “situations,” “encourage,” “opportunity,” “precious.”

Kindness or Hatred?

Your walking down the road and you see a town where everybody treats everyone else with respect. You see people waving and chatting with others. You also see people helping others carry things or helping them with an issue they may have. All of these things are acts of kindness which should be practiced everyday. People don't realize how being kind can make a good change for a person, and that is why being kind is important.

One reason why being kind is important is because it makes a happier environment. The people in the community would want to be around each other and spend time with others in the community because they get treated.

Another reason is it unites people. Everyone would be friends and would get along with others. It helps people feel like they should be around their community and makes them feel like they should be kind in return.

Finally, it helps people feel welcomed. For instance, there may be new neighbors and the community treats them with kindness. Then, the new family would want to stay there because they feel like they are liked and loved by others.

Student Response

Score: 3-3-3

For example, a time when I participated in an act of kindness was in seventh grade. There was a new student from across the country. She only knew her family and hardly anybody talked to her. My friend and I talked to her everyday and welcomed her. She was kind to us in return. Now, she is my best friend and we are with each other all the time.

In conclusion, being kind is very important to building better relationships. Happier environment, unites people, and helps people feel welcomed are only a few reasons why kindness is important. In return, you will have more friends, a better reputation, and you will be treated well if you are kind.

Annotation

3 Content

The writer establishes and maintains an authentic focused purpose. The writer uses several techniques in narrating for the transactive purpose of persuading the audience that kindness is important. These include asking the audience to imagine that they are entering a town where people treat each other with kindness and citing reasons why kindness is important (e.g., “Your walking down the road and you see a town where everybody treats everyone else with respect,” “Another reason is it unites people,” “Finally, it helps people feel welcomed”). The writer also maintains the purpose by describing a specific act of kindness (e.g., “There was a new student from across the country,” “My friend and I talked to her everyday”).

The writer indicates an awareness of the audience’s needs. The writer attends to the needs of the audience in various ways, including making statements that are direct and to the point (e.g., “All of these things are acts of kindness which should be practiced everyday,” “being kind is very important to building better relationships”). The story about the writer befriending a new girl at school also indicates awareness of the audience’s needs. The story demonstrates the writer’s ideas in action (e.g., “My friend and I talked to her everyday and welcomed her. She was kind to us in return. Now, she is my best friend and we are with each other all the time”).

The writer adequately communicates with the audience by including ideas and information that enhance the transactive purpose in the editorial (e.g., “there may be new neighbors and the community treats them with kindness. Then, the new family would want to stay there because they feel like they are liked and loved”). The writing conveys the writer’s voice. The writer’s voice indicates that the writer is earnest in his/her opinions and has prior knowledge about the importance of being kind, which allows the writer to speak with authority (e.g., “You see people waving and chatting with others,” “You also see people helping others carry things or helping them with an issue they may have,” “In conclusion, being kind is very important to building better relationships”).

The writer demonstrates depth of idea development with specific support. The writer elaborates on central ideas by using details that illustrate why people need and respond to kindness. Ideas include kindness as a force that unites people and kindness as a force that makes people feel welcomed. The story about an act of kindness contains details that help to illustrate both of these ideas (e.g., “There was a new student from across the country. She only knew her family and hardly anybody talked to her,” “My friend and I talked to her,” “Now, she is my best friend”). The writer would need to provide specific support for some ideas to be effective. For example, in the last paragraph, the writer states that people improve their reputations by showing kindness, but does not develop this idea (e.g., “In return, you will have more friends, a better reputation, and you will be treated well if you are kind”).

The writer applies a characteristic of the editorial genre by expressing his/her opinions about the importance of kindness and explaining them (e.g., “it [kindness] helps people feel welcomed. For instance, there may be new neighbors and the community treats them with kindness. Then, the

Annotation

new family would want to stay there because they feel like they are liked and loved”). The writer applies a characteristic of the genre by writing the title as a question (“Kindness or Hatred?”). Editorials are opinion pieces and writers use them to persuade an audience to change or to act. The writer is able to suggest that there are moral implications regarding the topic by framing the title as a question (e.g., “People don’t realize how being kind can make a good change for a person,” “There was a new student from across the country,” “hardly anybody talked to her”).

3 Structure

The writer demonstrates logical and coherent organization. The editorial is composed of six paragraphs consisting of an introductory paragraph, four topic paragraphs, and a concluding paragraph. Each paragraph contributes to the progression of the discussion of kindness (e.g., “it [kindness] makes a happier environment,” “it [kindness] unites people,” “it [kindness] helps people feel welcomed,” “being kind is very important to building better relationships”).

The writer demonstrates logical, effective transitional elements. The transitional elements include restating ideas (e.g., “People don’t realize how being kind can make a good change for a person, and that is why being kind is important,” “One reason why being kind is important is because it makes a happier environment”) and a variety of phrases and words (e.g., “Another reason,” “Finally,” “For example”). The transitional elements are basically quite simple, but they help the writer craft a cohesive and comprehensible text.

The writer demonstrates control and variety in sentence structure. The response contains complex and simple sentences (e.g., “Everyone would be friends and would get along with others,” “Finally, it helps people feel welcomed”). Some of the sentences have compound participle phrases (e.g., “You see people waving and chatting with others,” “You also see people helping others carry things or helping them with an issue they may have”). There are sentences that begin with adverbial phrases (e.g., “For instance, there may be new neighbors and the community treats them with kindness,” “Then, the new family would want to stay”).

The response contains errors in sentence structure; some errors interrupt the flow of communication (e.g., “Happier environment, unites people, and helps people feel welcomed are only a few reasons why kindness is important”). Some sentences could be clearer and more effective if they were revised: “For example, when I was in the seventh grade, I participated in an act of kindness” rather than “For example, a time when I participated in an act of kindness was in seventh grade.”

3 Conventions

The writer demonstrates control of grammar and usage relative to length and complexity. Grammar enhances rhetorical power in the editorial (e.g., “You see people waving and chatting with others. You also see people helping others carry things or helping them with an issue

Annotation

they may have,” “My friend and I talked to her everyday and welcomed her. She was kind to us in return. Now, she is my best friend and we are with each other all the time”). There are some grammatical and usage errors, including the article “the” rather than “a” (“people in the community would want to be around each other). It is incorrect to use the article “the” because the writer is referring to communities in general and not to a specific community. The writer uses the adjective “your” as a verb (“Your walking down the road”). The word “happy” rather than “happier” is the correct adjective to use in this sentence “One reason why being kind is important is because it makes a happier environment.”

The writer demonstrates acceptable word choice appropriate for the audience and purpose. There are words in the editorial that effectively express the meaning of important ideas (e.g., “treats,” “chatting,” “practiced,” “unites,” “building better relationships”). There are some nonspecific and imprecise words (e.g., “things,” “make a good change for a person”). The writer demonstrates control of correctness relative to length and complexity. The writer spells grade-level and below grade-level words correctly (e.g., “chatting,” “practiced,” “environment,” “participated,” “conclusion,” “reputation”). The writer uses apostrophes, commas, and other punctuation marks correctly (e.g., “don’t,” “People don’t realize how being kind can make a good change for a person, and that is why being kind is important”). The writer correctly capitalizes words throughout the response—for example, the title of the editorial (“Kindness or Hatred?”).

Student Response

Score: 2-2-2

Being kind isn't something you do just because you feel sorry for someone or to make you feel good about yourself, but should be an act everyone in the community should participate in every day.

It is important to promote kindness in the community because it helps to better relationships. Being kind to others also helps build character and improves manners. Improved self-esteem is also a result of kindness. But most importantly, kindness keeps you happy and can often make others happy as well.

Kindness can be shown in many different ways. An example of kindness is when a local club in my community throws a Valentine's Day party for a Nursing home. This party is fun for both the party throwers and for the elderly because they enjoy the food, laughter, and games. It also means a lot to the residents of the Nursing home to know that the people of the community care enough for them to throw them a party.

Although not everyone tries to promote kindness in the community, with just a

Student Response

Score: 2-2-2

little work we can increase our kindness. Being kind is like a spreading disease, if you are kind to someone they are likely to be kind to someone else, and that person to another, and so on. So lets begin our promotion of kindness in order to better our community.

2 Content

The writer attempts to establish and maintain a narrowed purpose. The writer's purpose is to explain/persuade why kindness should be an act everyone in the community should participate in every day. However, the writer does not successfully maintain the narrowed purpose throughout the writing. The lapse in focus occurs when the writer strays from the transactive purpose of the editorial and just talks about different issues concerning kindness, such as what kindness is (e.g., "Being kind isn't something you do just because you feel sorry for someone").

The writer indicates some awareness of the audience's needs and makes some attempt to communicate with the audience. The writer narrates for a transactive purpose, communicating his/her opinions for the purpose of persuading the audience to be kind to others. The writer provides ideas that are relevant to the topic of being kind to others (e.g., "It is important to promote kindness in the community because it helps to better relationships. Being kind to others also helps build character and improves manners. Improved self-esteem is also a result of kindness"). The writer reveals critical thinking on issues that pertain to the topic, such as the exponential effects of being kind to others (e.g., "if you are kind to someone they are likely to be kind to someone else, and that person to another, and so on"). The writer portrays kindness as a powerful action with these statements. The writer demonstrates some tone. The tone is appropriately caring and sympathetic.

The writer demonstrates some idea development with unelaborated support. The writer discusses reasons why people in a community should be kind to each other in the second paragraph (e.g., "it helps to better relationships," "helps build character and improves manners"). The writer describes a specific act of kindness—the writer's community throws a Valentine's Day party for residents of a nursing home. However, the writer does not utilize the story effectively to support ideas from the second paragraph in narrating for a transactive purpose: for example, the idea that kindness "helps to better relationships." Details in the story merely allude to how the Valentine's Day party has helped "to better relationships" between people in the community (e.g., "This party is fun for both the party throwers and for the elderly because they enjoy the food, laughter, and games. It also means a lot to the residents of the Nursing home to know that the people of the community care enough for them to throw them a party").

The writer applies some characteristics of the editorial genre. Editorials usually contain some of the characteristics that are in this response. The writer begins the editorial on a powerful note with an unequivocal statement about kindness ("Being kind isn't something you do just because you feel sorry for someone or to make you feel good about yourself, but should be an act everyone in the community should participate in every day"). The writer includes a story about real events and people: the Valentine's Day party with residents and workers at a nursing home. The writer speaks directly to the audience (e.g., "So let's begin our promotion of kindness in order to better our community").

Annotation

2 Structure

The writing demonstrates logical organization with lapses in coherence. The first and last paragraphs are the introduction and conclusion of the editorial; both paragraphs are composed of philosophical ideas about kindness the writer wants the audience to understand (e.g., “[kindness] should be an act everyone in the community should participate in every day,” “with just a little work we can increase our kindness”). But support for these ideas is unelaborated, resulting in lapses in coherence throughout the editorial. This occurs because the writer does not use the information in the body paragraphs to develop the ideas about kindness.

The writer demonstrates some effective transitional elements. The writer connects sentences and paragraphs mainly by repeating the word “kindness” or reiterating the concept of kindness (e.g., “kindness keeps you happy and can often make others happy as well. Kindness can be shown in many different ways. An example of kindness”). Transitional elements also include an adverbial phrase (“Although not everyone tries to promote kindness”) and a gerund (“Being kind”). The writer demonstrates simple sentences (e.g., “Being kind to others also helps build character and improves manners”). The writer attempts more complex sentences but lacks control of sentence structure. The complex sentences tend to be redundant and awkward (e.g., “It also means alot to the residents of the Nursing home to know that the people of the community care enough for them to throw them a party,” “Although not everyone tries to promote kindness in the community, with just a little work we can increase our kindness”). There are many passive sentences, but, in some cases, the writer could have used active sentences; this would have enhanced clarity and fluidity in the writing (e.g., “Kindness also improves self-esteem” rather than “Improved self-esteem is also a result of kindness”).

2 Conventions

The writing demonstrates some control of grammar and usage with some errors that do not interfere with communication. The writer uses a nominative, “promotion of kindness,” as an object noun in a sentence. This is not grammatically incorrect, but, in this case, using a nominative causes the sentence to be conspicuous and awkward (“So lets begin our promotion of kindness in order to better our community”). The writer could have written the object noun of the sentence in a variety of ways including “So let’s begin promoting kindness” or “So let’s begin to promote kindness.” The grammar in the response indicates that the writer is attempting to write in a style that is appropriately sophisticated for the genre. The writing demonstrates some imprecise word choice. The word “improve” is more precise than “better” to use in the following sentences (“It is important to promote kindness in the community because it helps to better relationships,” “So lets begin our promotion of kindness in order to better our community”).

The writing demonstrates some control of correctness (e.g., “But most importantly, kindness keeps you happy and can often make others happy as well,” “An example of kindness is when a local club in my community throws a Valentine’s Day party”). Errors in spelling, punctuation,

Annotation

and capitalization do not interfere with communication. The writer misspells a simple word “sorroy” (sorry). Most of the punctuation is correct (e.g., “This party is fun for both the party throwers and for the elderly because they enjoy the food, laughter, and games,” “Although not everyone tries to promote kindness in the community, with just a little work we can increase our kindness”). The response includes a comma splice (“Being kind is like a spreading disease, if you are kind to someone they are likely to be kind to someone else”). The correct punctuation mark to use is a semicolon rather than a comma between the clauses in the sentence. The writer incorrectly capitalizes the word “Nursing” in “Nursing home.”

Student Response

Score: 1-1-1

H/1 I am going to tell you how I am generous + trying to help our neighborhood. I have three things that I will tell you. First thing I am going to talk about is helping people out. I will cut people's grass + will shovel people's drive ways. I only charge twenty dollars to do it. That aint that much. Another thing I do is invite people over so that we can watch a football game or play football or cornhole. The last thing I am going to talk about is when bigger kids pick on littler kids I will help the littler kids out. There was this one time where these big kids were picking on smaller kids in a football game. Then I started playing for the little kids + the big kids wanted to quit. This is how I try to be generous + helping in my neighborhood.

Annotation

1 Content

The writer attempts to establish a general purpose, but the response lacks focus. The writer lists acts of kindness he/she has performed and a few details that describe them (e.g., “I will cut people’s grass + will shovel people’s drive ways. I only charge twenty dollars to do it. That aint that much,” “Another thing I do is invite people over so that we can watch a football game”); the list indicates the writer’s attempt to narrate for a transactive purpose in order to persuade the audience that kindness is important. However, the writer does not explain why these acts of kindness are important; the writer’s purpose is obscure as a result.

The writer indicates limited awareness of the audience’s needs. The writer begins the response by telling the audience about acts of kindness he/she has performed. At the end of the response, the writer emphasizes that these deeds are how he/she shows kindness to others (e.g., “This is how I try to be generous + helping in my neighborhood”). The response lacks a focused purpose and contains limited details; both of these elements—a focused purpose and sufficient details—are needed for the writer to be able to communicate his/her meaning to the audience.

The writer demonstrates limited idea development with weak support (e.g., “I will cut people’s grass + will shovel people’s drive ways. I only charge twenty dollars to do it. That aint that much”). The writer lists acts of kindness and a few details that describe them (e.g., “I will help the littler kids out. There was this one time where these big kids were picking on smaller kids in a football game”).

The writer applies some characteristics of the editorial genre. The writer begins the response by addressing the audience (“Hi I am going to tell you how I am generous + trying to help our neighbor hood”). The writer continues to use this technique throughout the response (e.g., “The last thing I am going to talk about is when bigger kids pick on littler kids”).

1 Structure

The writer demonstrates weak organization. The response is a single lengthy paragraph. This single-paragraph response only partially answers the writing prompt. The response contains some organizing elements, including a salutation (“Hi”), an introductory sentence (“I am going to tell you how I am generous”), and a concluding sentence (“This is how I try to be generous + helping in my neighborhood”). The body text in the response consists mainly of a list of acts of kindness the writer has performed.

The writer demonstrates limited transitional elements. The writer uses transitional phrases and words (e.g., “First thing I am going to talk about,” “Another thing I do,” “The last thing,” “Then”). The writing demonstrates some incorrect sentence structure. Some errors impair coherence and fluidity in the writing (e.g., “I am going to tell you how I am generous + trying to help our neighbor hood,” “The last thing I am going to talk about is when bigger kids pick on littler kids I will help the littler kids out”).

Annotation

1 Conventions

The writing demonstrates lack of control in grammar and usage. There are many grammatical errors, including unparallel grammatical structures (e.g., “This is how I try to be generous + helping in my neighborhood”), incorrect verbs (e.g., “aint”), and the article “this” as a modifier (e.g., “There was this one time”). The writing demonstrates incorrect and ineffective word choice. The word choice shows limited vocabulary, which prevents the writer from communicating his/her opinions and ideas effectively (e.g., “I have three things that I will tell you,” “There was this one time where these big kids were picking on smaller kids”). Many of the words are informal and juvenile, and, therefore, they are inappropriate for the purpose and genre of the response (e.g., “thing,” “aint,” “talk about”).

The writer demonstrates lack of control of correctness. The writer misspells words that are below the vocabulary level for grade eight: “peple” rather than “people,” “drive ways,” rather than “driveways.” The writer demonstrates lack of control of punctuation. The writer omits punctuation marks (e.g., “Hi I am going to tell you how I am generous,” “The last thing I am going to talk about is when bigger kids pick on littler kids I will help the littler kids out”). The writer most likely would have committed more errors in correctness if he/she had written a longer response.

Student Response

Score: 0-0-1

ever sine i ~~was~~ 12 years old I have been
hepping old people and my family and I love
to help people for example. Cutting grass,
it is easy I think it is. And I get
Pay well. and Painting, Building things, laying Block,
and others.

Annotation

0 Content

The writing lacks purpose. The writing task requires the student to narrate for the transactive purpose of persuading the audience that kindness is important. The writer does not succeed at narrating for a transactive purpose because the response is extremely limited in scope; the writer attempts to explain that he or she is a helpful person (e.g., “ever sine i was 12 years old I have been helping old people and my family and I love to help people for example. cutting grass”). The response lacks idea development; it contains a few random details about acts of kindness (“cutting grass,” “painting,” “Building things”). The writer does not provide details to explain why these acts of kindness are important (i.e., making the writer feel good, making the recipients’ lives better, improving relationships between people). The writer lacks awareness of the audience. This is indicated by the lack of idea development and focused purpose in the response.

0 Structure

The writing demonstrates random organization. The response is a single brief paragraph. The first sentence would be a good introduction, except for incorrect sentence structure (“ever sine i was 12 years old I have been helping old people and my family and I love to help people for example”). The writing lacks transitional elements. The writing reads as though the words are tumbling out of the writer’s mouth at random (e.g., “I love to help people for example. cutting grass, it is easy I think it is. and I get pay well”). The writer demonstrates incorrect sentence structure throughout. The writing consists of run-on sentences and fragments (e.g., “cutting grass, it is easy I think it is,” “and painting, Building things, laying Block, and others”).

1 Conventions

The writer demonstrates lack of control of grammar and usage. Grammatical errors are mainly caused by incorrect sentence structure. Grammatical errors include unparallel verb forms (e.g., “I have been helping old people and my family and I love to help people”). The writer demonstrates incorrect and ineffective word choice. The word choice shows limited vocabulary, which prevents the writer from expressing his/her ideas (e.g., “I have been helping old people”). The writer lacks control of correctness. There is one misspelled word, “sine” rather than “since.” The response is fraught with punctuation and capitalization errors. The writer uses end punctuation incorrectly (e.g., “my family and I love to help people for example. cutting grass”). The writer does not capitalize the first word of a sentence or capitalize the personal pronoun “I” in the following example (“ever sine i was 12 years old I have been helping old people”). The writer capitalizes an ordinary noun (“Building”).

Grade 8 Multiple Choice

This part of the test contains three reading selections with a total of twelve multiple-choice questions. Please mark your answer for each multiple-choice question in the space provided in your Student Response Booklet (Writing – Part A). Mark only one answer for each question. If you do not know the answer, make your best guess.

DO NOT WRITE ANY ANSWERS IN THIS TEST BOOKLET. WHEN YOU FINISH, DO NOT WORK ON ANY OTHER PART OF THE TEST.

Amy is writing about how she formed an opinion about something. She has written a rough draft. Now she needs help revising and editing it. Read Amy's draft and answer the questions that follow.

A Strong Opinion

1 Most social studies classes have a current events assignment. You know, the kind where you
2 find a news item that you have an opinion about, and then you write a paragraph explaining your
3 opinion.

4 I have a hard time with these assignments and these assignments are really hard. Once I
5 understand an issue, I can easily see both sides of it.

6 This changed when I saw a recent article in the local newspaper. It was about how some
7 people in my city are against cleaning up the pollution that a company left in the river. The
8 company ABC Manufacturing is now out of business, so it cannot be held responsible for the
9 cleanup. The citizens of our city are responsible, and the people against the cleanup are angry.

10 This seems really wrong to me it doesn't matter who made the mess! If the pollution doesn't
11 get cleaned up, the plants and animals that live in and around the river will suffer.

12 I decided to write an article about this topic to express my opinion. With my dad's
13 encouragement, I sent my piece to the newspaper, too. I guess when you care deeply about
14 something, it's easy to have a strong opinion about it.

Mark your answer choices for multiple-choice questions 1 through 4 in the spaces provided in your Student Response Booklet (Writing – Part A).

1. Choose the **best** way to make the sentence in line 4 less repetitive.

I have a hard time with these assignments and these assignments are really hard.

- A. These assignments are difficult for me to write.
- B. I have a hard time with these hard assignments.
- C. These hard assignments are really hard to write.
- D. I have a difficult time with these assignments and these assignments are really difficult.

2. Choose the **best** closing sentence to add to the paragraph that begins on line 4.

- A. We talk about current events a lot in class.
- B. Consequently, I do not look forward to these assignments.
- C. As it happens, my best friend does not really enjoy these assignments.
- D. We write these kinds of assignments in science, too.

3. Choose the correct way to write the underlined part of line 8.

The company ABC Manufacturing is now out of business, so it cannot be held responsible for the cleanup.

- A. company ABC Manufacturing, is
- B. company, ABC Manufacturing, is
- C. company, ABC Manufacturing is
- D. No change is needed.

4. Choose the correct way to rewrite this sentence from line 10.

This seems really wrong to me it doesn't matter who made the mess!

- A. This seems really wrong to me; it doesn't matter who made the mess!
- B. This seems really wrong to me: it doesn't matter who made the mess!
- C. This seems really wrong to me! and it doesn't matter who made the mess!
- D. No change is needed.